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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Daniel H. Abelow
Serial No.:
Filed : August 6, 1999
Title : CUSTOMER-BASED PRODUCT DESIGN MODULE
Art Unit:
Examiner:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, DC 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Preliminarily, kindly amend the application as follows:

Cancel claims 1 - 47 and add the following new claims:

12/13/00 SUBD 48
1. A system comprising:
units of a commodity that are used by respective users
in different locations,
a user interface which is part of each of the units of
the commodity and provides a medium for two-way interaction
between one of the users and the corresponding unit of the
commodity for generating information about use of the unit of the
commodity by the user,
a communication element that is associated with each of
the units of the commodity and carries results of the two-way
interaction from each of the units of the commodity to a central
location, and
software that manages the interactions of the users in
different locations and collection of the results of the
interactions at the central location.

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49
2. The system of claim 1 further comprising electronically triggering the user interface based on user behaviors to generate two-way interactions with each of the users, each of the interactions relating to a corresponding specific behavior.

Pub #3
3. The system of claim 1 in which the interactions are triggered to occur repetitively for each of the users based on repeated uses of a feature of a unit of the commodity by the user.

51
4. The system of claim 1 in which the user interface comprises part of a functional user interface of the unit of the commodity that is used to control features of the commodity.

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5. The system of claim 1 in which the user interface comprises a functional user interface that is separate from the unit of the commodity.

Pub #4
53
6. The system of claim 1 in which the units of the commodity comprise telephone extension equipment and the central location comprises a private branch exchange or other central telephone network facility.

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7. The system of claim 1 in which the results of the interactions are forwarded from the central location to a remote server for analysis.

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8. The system of claim 1 in which the units of the commodity comprise facsimile equipment and the user interface triggers the two-way interaction to occur on-line between the unit of the facsimile equipment and a vendor of the facsimile equipment.

50602 56
9. The system of claim 8 in which the on-line interaction would occur by voice spoken through the facsimile machine's handset, transmitted by telephone line to a computer of the vendor, and stored at the vendor's computer.

Pub #657
10. The system of claim 1 in which the units of the commodity comprise consumer television equipment.

SUBG2 58
11. The system of claim 10 in which the two-way interaction provides instructions on how to use the commodity.

A SUBD3 59
12. The system of claim 10 in which the two-way interaction comprises posing questions to a user on a television screen concerning use of the commodity, and receiving answers from the user expressed through a keypad, a hand-held remote, or a telephone keypad.

Pub #9 60
13. The system of claim 12 in which the answers are forwarded to a vendor of the commodity.

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14. The system of claim 1 in which the two-way interaction is mediated by an publicly or privately accessible on-line computerized information service.

SUBG3 62
15. The system of claim 1 further comprising presenting user information in one or more of the following styles: text, lists, charts, views, arrangements, hierarchies, graphical maps, sample extracts, abstracts, summary descriptions, or hypertext.

SUBD4 63
16. The system of claim 15 in which the user interface triggers two-way interactions that comprise training and education based on two-way interactions with all or some other users, the interactions being arranged to present the steps or

actions that the user could take to increase performance or satisfaction to a level achieved by other users.

64/17. A method comprising

initiating automated phone calls through a private branch exchange to users of a commodity provided by an entity that operates the private branch exchange,

by speech synthesis, asking each user a question concerning the commodity,

receiving responses of the users entered through the telephone, and

using the responses to adjust the use of the commodity by the user.

65/18. The method of claim 17 in which the commodity comprises employee services.

66/19. The method of claim 18 in which the employee services comprise health services.

67/20. The method of claim 17 in which the responses are automatically processed and forwarded to a human resources group for action.

68/21. The method of claim 17 in which the private branch exchange comprises a publicly or privately available on-line facility.

69/22. The method of claim 21 in which the on-line facility poses questions by speech synthesis, electronic mail, text, video or other communication.

70/23. The method of claim 21 further comprising presenting user information in one or more of the following

as
styles: text, lists, charts, views, arrangements, hierarchies,
graphical maps, sample extracts, abstracts, summary descriptions,
or hypertext.--

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Respectfully submitted,

Date: _____

8/6/99



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